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## Coral Reefs of the Caribbean and Venezuela

The coral reefs of the Caribbean and Venezuela possess a diversity of life and habitat that reveal a fascinating and beautiful underwater world. Brain corals may be seen during the day and at night with their tentacles completely extended. There are rays, parrot fish and butterfly fish (which do not fly). And there is Nembo, Disney's clown fish, who we can find. Besides colorful fish, there are sea anemones, octopi, and squid.

This varied and mysterious marine environment has enticed photographers as well as oceanographers and other divers to these watery sites.

ASO member Bechara Embaid, Oceanographer graduate from the University of Washington and the American University of Beirut, will bring a slide presentation of the coral reefs to our September 11 general meeting. Bechara is a diver and a lecturer on the conservation of the marine environment in his native country, Venezuela. He lectured for 15 years at all major diving clubs in his country, including those of the petroleum industry. He has media



experience in television and radio. His lectures are known for their educational and entertainment value, presented for general audiences of all ages.

Bechara founded the Marine Conservation Center of the Audubon Society of Venezuela, where he served for five years as a board member and chair of activism. He also participated with other local environmental organizations including FUDENA (Foundation for the Defense of Nature) on whose team he represented Venezuela for the international day of beach cleanup, an effort involving 15,000 volunteers. A brief description of the Venezuelan environmental movement will also be presented.

Come to enjoy the beauty and wonder of the sea at the general meeting, Thursday, September 11, 7:30 P.M. at the Hanscom Park Methodist Church, 4444 Frances Street (one block south of 45th & Center).

A short business meeting will follow the program, followed by cookies, coffee and

## Fall Field Trip to Schramm State Recreation Area

By Clem Klaphake

On Saturday, September 20, Clem Klaphake will lead a birding field trip to the Schramm State Recreation Area south of Omaha. There will be some walking on both level ground and a few hills (wear appropriate shoes). The focus of the trip will be passerine migrants. If the 'action' at Schramm is slow, Clem will also investigate

Louisville State Recreation Area across the Platte River from Schramm. The easiest route to Museum parking lot at 8:00 A.M. Because Schramm is via I-80 to the Nebraska Crossing it is a State Recreation Area, there is a fee Outlet Mall/Flying J truck stop exist onto Highway 31 south for approximately 5 miles. Everyone should meet at the Schramm Museum parking lot at 8:00 A.M. Because Schramm is via I-80 to the Nebraska Crossing it is a State Recreation Area, there is a fee Outlet Mall/Flying J truck stop exist onto Highway 31 south for approximately 5 miles. If the 'action' at Schramm is slow, Clem will also investigate Louisville State Recreation Area across the Platte River from Schramm. The easiest route to Museum parking lot at 8:00 A.M. Because Schramm is via I-80 to the Nebraska Crossing it is a State Recreation Area, there is a fee Outlet Mall/Flying J truck stop exist onto Highway 31 south for approximately 5 miles. sticker on your vehicle. If you don't have a yearly Park sticker, you may want to carpool with someone who does.

## Bird Seed Sale Date - October 25-26 - Page 3

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### Nelli's Notes

By Nelli Falzgraf

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#### A New Director of Audubon Nebraska

**Don Helmuth**, the Chief Operating Officer at the State Office, has been appointed the Executive Director of Audubon Nebraska. He brings with him a wealth of research, administrative, and fundraising experience.

Don earned a doctorate in entomology studying the transmission of encephalitis, and has conducted ecological studies ranging from dietary habits of owls to tidal salt marshes of the East Coast. He is

firm your connection to the natural world, perhaps at ASO activities such as the Garden Walk or the sociable summer picnic or the Important Bird Areas program co-sponsored by the Bird Club, at conservation meetings, or helping **Glenn Pollock** at ASO's prairie and wetland.

My husband and I helped monitor a nest box route maintained by **Sharon Draper**, and many Eastern Bluebirds were fledged. My summer started with a Breeding Bird Survey north of O'Neill with **Laurine Blankenau** and

currently working with state and federal agencies to restore saline wetlands; he is also developing specialty crops for farmers to supplement their field crop and livestock income. He supervised research at Northeastern University and the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, and served as president of the Nebraska Public Radio Foundation. We look forward to working with a strong conservationist at the helm.

### **Fundraising for General Funds**

We've planned fundraising events to pay for projects identified with ASO. **Jackie Scholar** and **Sandy Kovanda** organized this summer's refreshing Garden Walk. **Kathleen Rose, Carole and Dick Rasmussen,** and **Jerry Toll** are continuing the Birdseed Sale (see item, next page) begun by **Neal Ratzlaff**. Bart Jetter updated the Birdseed Sale software under the direction of **Justin Stolen** and Neal. Justin helped recover the membership data base after the office computer was taken at the June burglary of the ASO building. **Bob Ellis** updates the more-than-1000 membership list for Birdseed Sale and newsletter mailing labels. Thank you all for giving your time and talent.

These two events, along with memberships, speaker donations, and 10% of Raptor Team revenues, fund the following: scholarships for local college students, Art Contest for K-12 students, ASO prairie restoration, monthly programs and nature activities, Action Alerts about healthy habitats, services such as Audubon Adventures and Speakers Bureau, the *Meadowlark* to inform the membership, the ASO building, and Omaha Raptor Team presentations at Regency and Earth Day events--in short, ASO general funds for operating expenses.

Some projects are cut unless fundraising supports them. If you could help, please consider a tax-deductible contribution, designating it as "Garden Walk" (it's never too late) or "Birdseed Sale" or simply "ASO."

progressed to helping **Betty Grenon** with bird banding at Boyer Chute for the Monitoring Avian Productivity and Survivorship project. The latter two study nesting birds and document changes in their distribution.

### **Back to Work**

As in the rest of life, fun was tempered with work, including the 2004 budget, reconciling past reports with the recent audit, and the IRS tax return.

I want to thank **Ione Werthman** and others for taking care of the ASO building after vandals broke glass and garage sale donations, turned over bookcases and files, and stole equipment.

Congratulations and honors are extended to **Ione**, who won the nomination for West Central Region Board Member for National Audubon. Her term will begin January 1.

We owe thanks to **Loren and Babs Padelford** for serving ASO in so many capacities. Most recently they started the Hawkwatch and Birdline, the latter recording sightings and spreading Nebraska birding news throughout the U.S. We appreciate their foresight and commitment toward the Audubon mission of conserving natural ecosystems, focusing on birds and other wildlife.

ASO volunteers planned fun fall functions. **Ed Higgins** arranged a fine program at the General Meeting September 11. **Ione Werthman** organized the first Wetland Festival September 20 and 21. **Clem Klaphake** will lead a fabulous field trip September. We hope you can join us.

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### **September Calendar**

3 (Wed) Board Meeting

4 (Thur) Bird Club Program

## A Breather Before Fall

I hope you've enjoyed summer and found time to reaf

8 (Mon) Conservation Meeting

11 (Thur) General Meeting

20 (Sat) Field Trip

20-21 Wetland Festival

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## Bird Seed Sale October 25-26

Each year before the leaves begin to fall, we start preparations for our annual bird seed sale. This year we will follow our usual tradition and ask for help with the numerous tasks, some requiring strong muscles, others not.

The bags need to be unloaded at sale sites, staffers need to be on hand on the dates of the sale for loading and paperwork.

If you can help load and unload bags of seed, contact volunteer coordinator Jerry Toll at 453-9239.

### Raptors and Hawkwatch

Audubon members and friends are invited to learn more about birds of prey and their annual fall migration. Clem Klaphake will teach the finer points of raptor identification and talk about Hawkwatch, held at Hitichcock Nature Area in the picturesque Loess Hill.

The FNA Bird Club is sponsoring Clem's program at 7:00 P.M. Thursday, September 4, at Camp Brewster in Bellevue. From I-80, take Kennedy Fwy south, exit onto Chandler Road east to 1313 N Bellevue Blvd. Refreshments will be available. For questions call Catherine Kuper, 558-4129.

## Nebraska Birdline Returns

After serving ASO so faithfully and so well for the past 12 years through their work on the Nebraska Birdline, Loren and Babs Padelford have passed this work on to a successor, Josef Kren. Thanks to the Padelfords from all who profited by their reporting bird sightings that directed us to the right spots for birds.

At the present time, there will not be a voice-recorded version of the birdline. We are, therefore, seeking a volunteer to take on this part of the duty, which is relatively simple. The text of the message can be obtained from email when it is sent out. It can then be recorded on the ASO recorder (Babs and Loren also prepared the text).

Josef is working on getting an 800 number set up that will take incoming bird reports from those persons who don't wish to or cannot report by email.

The email address for reporting bird sightings is [nebraskabirds@yahoo.com](mailto:nebraskabirds@yahoo.com)> The phone number to report sightings is (402) 721-5487. Josef's phone number is (402)721-6490.

As a reminder, a brief item will appear each month in subsequent issues of *The Meadowlark* bearing the phone numbers and email address for the Birdline.

### Fall Birding Class

## **Congratulations, Ione!**

One of ours has been selected as a nominee for a position on the National Audubon Board of Directors, winning 29 of 33 ballots cast (37% of the chapter's voting). Ione Werthman's name will be included in the slate of nominees, to be voted upon at the Board's annual meeting in December. She will represent the West Central Region on National's Board beginning in January 2004.

Congratulations on winning this office, Ione!

## **Birdathon Results - 2003**

On behalf of the ASO Board of Directors, we thank all who participated and donated to the 2003 Birdathon fundraising event. Donations totaling \$1,892 were received which, after expenses, was divided into six categories as designated by the donors. Those who searched the parks, lakes and rivers for birds were Dick Rasmussen, Kathy Schwery, Bill McDonald, Bechara Embaid and Ione Werthman.

Donors: Betty Allen, John Ball, Beverly Byrd, James Commers, Lori DeMartino, Pauline Dickey, Robert and Kathleen Doyle, Katherine Dudrick, Bechara Embaid, Marge Gardner, Mace Hack, Charles & Joan Hackett, Paul & Gloria Hainowski,

Birding for the Beginner, a six-week class through Metro Community College, will be offered at the Audubon Office, Heron Haven, by Ione Werthman and other knowledgeable birders. Starting on Saturday morning, November 1, the class will be held from 9:00 A.M. to noon through December 6. Registration must be made through Metro Community College. Everyone is invited to participate.

Richard & Judith Harvey, Ed Higgins, Waldon & Mary Johnson  
Karen Kahle, Mary Krejci, Richard & Patricia Kutilek, Joseph & Joan Lang, DwanDean Leach, J. O. & Ida Leistner, Betty Mannlein, Garry Mick, Dr. Tom Moriarty, David & Alice Love Nichols, Wanda Neaderhiser, Kathleen Nielsen, Marian Payton, Al & Jean Pisasale, Jodi Porter, Ellen Powers

Dick Rasmussen, Neal Ratzlaff, Dr. Barney Rees, Frances Rhodes, Nancy Roberts, Walter Schiermann, Cynthia Schneider, Julie Schroeder, Margaret Search, Lolita Sinderson, John T. Skinner, Dolores J. Tompsett, Kuba Travnicek, Ione Werthman, Bob & Deb Wigton, Margaret Wiltse.

An *Omaha World-Herald* editorial of Monday, August 18, said, "It was time for compromise; to set aside emotion for science and facts in regard to the Missouri River mud." Let me count the years we have debated this issue. (I helped photograph the building of Gavin's Point Dam, the dam responsible for the flow of water between Sioux City, IA and St. Louis, MO, in the 1950's). Don't hold your breath that this round of compromises will end the debate!

Rep. Lee Terry in an August 15 editorial in the *World-Herald* said that the river flow changes "give too little weight for the needs of humans." In other words, too much weight to wildlife. His ultimate comment was, "Both the Senate and the House must gather the political courage to bring some sensible reform to the Endangered Species Act."

For the record: Did you know that in the channelization between Sioux City and St. Louis, the river was shortened by 127 miles, and that the average width of the river was reduced by two-thirds, thus destroying over 114,000 acres of wetlands and 95% of all the river's sandbars and woodlands? When the dams were built, estimates were that the Missouri would carry 20 million tons of cargo annually.

However, navigation peaked at just 3.3 million in 1977 and now, at the most, only 1.5 million tons is carried up and down the river. Much of that is rock—rock that is needed and paid for by the Corps of Engineers to keep the river open for the barges. Where does the Corps of Engineers get their money to subsidize the barge companies? From us, the taxpayers.

Did you know that in their zeal to build the dams, the Corps ruined extensive bottomland and wooded areas in the Dakotas, including lands sacred to Native Americans? The Native Americans were paid only \$33 an acre for their best grazing lands.

from road building, logging, mining and development under the Roadless Rule. This has been protecting 9 million acres of the Tongass Forest, and 5 million acres of the Chugach Forest. Final decisions of the USFS will be upcoming.

Meanwhile, when Congress convenes in September, the U.S. Senate will debate and vote on two bills on forest initiative legislation. The Senate bill, S 1453, the Forestry and Community Assistance Act of 2003, focuses on protecting people and communities as well as our forests. The House bill, HR 1904, is misleadingly referred to as the Healthy Forest Restoration Act. However, the House bill allows widespread logging on national forest lands, limits public input and court appeals, and gives land managers broad new license to cut down millions of acres of national forest lands. It also allows the logging industry access to large, old trees which happen to be the most fire resistant trees. This approach would wreak havoc on the birds and wildlife of our forests while doing little to actually protect communities.

S 1453, the Senate bill, is by far the most comprehensive and sensible community fire protection and forest and watershed restoration bill that has been introduced to date. Because America's national forests comprise some of the most biologically and economically significant land left on earth, the 191 million acres of national forests are the best wildlife habitat in the U.S. for over 3,000 fish and wildlife species and 10,000 plants. It has also been proven that more than one-fourth of the nation's imperiled species are found in national forests.

We don't need to level our forests to prevent forest fires. Support for S 1453 will protect roadless areas, old growth, and threatened and endangered species habitat; will prohibit road construction on these ecologically valuable lands; will focus on protecting communities and their drinking water infrastructure; will establish watershed and forest

If any of you belong to an organization that would like a slide presentation on the Missouri River, give me a call. There's more to tell.

## **Forests**

National Audubon reports that thousands upon thousands of letters from Audubon activist members were sent to the U.S. Forest Service to weigh in on its proposal to exempt the Tongass National Forest and the Chugach National Forest (both in Alaska) from protections under the Roadless Area Conservation Rule. As we know, roadless areas located within these forests are currently protected

restoration programs and fund these projects by engaging American citizens in the forest planning process without gutting environmental laws.

A fax or call to Senator Ben Nelson and Senator Chuck Hagel in support of S 1453 and opposition to H. R. 1904 will make a difference. See back of newsletter for their numbers.

**Join us for our new season of Conservation meetings - September 8, October 6, November 3, 7:30 P.M. Audubon Office, 11809 Old Maple Road. Become an Audubon Armchair Activist.**

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## **Omaha Raptor Team - A Committee of ASO**

**- By Alison O'Connor**

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## **Hitchcock Hawkwatch Begins - Two Mississippi Kites Seen**

By Jerry Toll

The Hitchcock Hawkwatch has resumed counting migrating raptors as of August 15. By the time this newsletter comes out, the hawk migration should be in full swing. September is the time to come out to look for Mississippi Kites. On August 22, the time of this writing, two Mississippi Kites were seen, heralding the beginning of the raptor migration season.

Conditions seem favorable again this month for a strong flight. In past years when the Kites appeared in August, it foretold a strong flight in September. Most early September migrants are Turkey Vultures. Ospreys and Coopers Hawks may also peak by mid month.

uled to coincide with the Hawkwatch. The Fontenelle Bird Club has tentatively chosen a mid-September Saturday to have a field trip to the Hawkwatch. Saturday, October 4, is the Hawkfest sponsored by the Hitchcock Nature Area. The Iowa Ornithologists Union meeting at HNA is October 10-12. Also planned are field trips by ASO, Wachiska and Loess Hills Audubon Chapters.

The Hitchcock Hawkwatch continues through December 15. All are welcome to come and see the hawks, regardless of their skills. Staff and skilled volunteers will be present most days to locate and identify hawks with you. The Hitchcock Hawkwatch is financially supported by

September 15-30 is when the action really begins. The majority of the Broadwings (last year 434) pass through during this time. They are closely followed by Swainson's Hawks that push through in late September to early October. Last year we had 1,914 Swainson's Hawks, with 1,054 of those appearing in one day (October 2)! Merlins, Peregrines, Kestrels, and Sharp-shinned Hawks usually peak about this time as well.

A number of events at Hitchcock are tentatively sched

We are grateful to the fine gardeners who made ASO's first Garden Walk of July 13 possible, and a success! And thanks to Jackie Scholar, who organized the Walk.

The day was quite warm, but of those attending, no one

the Pottawattomie County Conservation Board, who manage Hitchcock Nature Area. It is located 5 miles north of Crescent, Iowa, on Hwy 183, which is just north of Council Bluffs off I-29. When you get to Crescent, just follow the signs. The Hawkwatch site is a Lodge with a spacious deck overlooking the Missouri River Valley. It is without a doubt the best place to watch sunsets. There are wooded and prairie trails to hike if desired. The Lodge is handicapped accessible. Entry fee is \$2 per vehicle.

complained of the heat. They did express enjoyment of the beauty and variety of colorful flowers as well as gardens' designs. Shown here are proofs of some of the gardeners' skills.

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## **Carol Browner Elected National Audubon Society Chair**

ing to protect America's great natural heritage."

New York, NY, July 8, 2003 - Carol M. Browner, the longest serving administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, will be the first woman to chair Audubon and is one of few women to hold such a position at a major conservation organization.

Browner will replace Donal C. O'Brien when he retires this fall after having served 18 years as Audubon Chair, 12 consecutively. Browner joined the Audubon Board in 2001 and currently oversees its Public Policy Committee.

Browner served as EPA Administrator from 1993 to 2001. Throughout her tenure, she was guided by the philosophy that safeguarding the environment meant protecting where and how people live. She partnered with business leaders, community advocates, and all levels of government to promote common sense, cost-effective solutions to the nation's most pressing environmental and public health problems.

Browner's efforts to protect and restore our environment range from the health of our children to wildlife habitats. Some of her many accomplishments include the strongest public health-based clean air standards ever for soot and smog; tough new emission standards for cars, SUVs, diesel trucks, and buses; greatly expanded public right-to-know efforts; as well as significantly increased funding and strengthened standards for clean water and polluted runoff.

She accelerated cleanup of hazardous waste sites, which resulted in more than three times the number of Superfund cleanups than in the entire history of the program; she created the successful Brownfields program to reclaim and redevelop abandoned, contaminated urban properties; and she worked closely with Congress to pass the Food Quality Protection Act and Safe Drinking Water Act. Browner also created the EPA's first Office of Children's Health Protection; the Office

"I grew up near the Everglades, where I learned to love birds and wildlife," Browner said. "I developed a passion for protecting the incredible natural resource and very early on learned of Audubon's many decades of experience in fighting for Everglades conservation. In a sense, I feel I have come full circle and look forward to helping lead this organization as it addresses the many environmental challenges of the 21st century." Browner's history of working with community and grass roots leaders will strengthen Audubon's chapter and volunteer efforts, while building new constituencies.

In the year 2000, Audubon announced a major new initiative, called the "2020 Vision," designed to significantly expand the number of people engaged in conservation activities. Key to the program is the building of a network of Audubon nature centers in cities and towns throughout the U.S, many in underprivileged areas.

"Carol will chair Audubon at a very important time in its history as it pursues a new vision to enlarge the conservation movement across the country," Flicker continued. "She will help guide us as we seek to engage people of all ages and backgrounds in positive conservation experiences."

"I am particularly attracted to Audubon because of its commitment to expand conservation constituencies across the country and engage diverse communities. Audubon is working hard to change the face of conservation to reflect the diverse face of America," Browner said.

Prior to leading the EPA, she was head of the Department of Environmental Regulation in Florida. She is currently a principal at The Albright Group, global strategy firm, and is a senior fellow in the Aspen Institute's Program on Energy, the Environment and the Economy.

Browner received the American Lung Association's prestigious President's Award in 2000. She has also been honored with the Mother of the Year Award from the National Mother's Day Committee and

of Environmental Information, the American Indian Environmental Office, the National Environmental Justice Advisory Council, and the Office of Reinvention.

"Carol Browner is one of the outstanding conservationists of our time," said Audubon President John Flicker. "Again and again she has led the way in fight

the Advocate for Children Award from the Ambulatory Pediatric Association. In 1998, Audubon of Florida gave Ms. Browner the Guy M. Bradley Lifetime Achievement Award for her work on restoration of the Everglades.

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**Addresses to Remember**

President George W. Bush  
The White House, 1600  
Pennsylvania Ave NW  
Washington D.C. 20500-0001

Comments: 202-456-1111;  
fax: 202-456-2993

Senator Ben Nelson

U.S. Senate, Washington DC  
20510; 202-224-6551; fax  
202-228-0012; Lincoln: 402-  
437-5246; Omaha 391-3411;  
Omaha address: 7602 Pacific  
St, #205, 68114

Senator Chuck Hagel

U.S. Senate, Washington,  
D.C. 20510-2705

Phone: (202) 224-4224; Fax:  
(202) 224-5213

Omaha phone: (402) 758-  
8981

Representative Lee Terry

U.S. House of  
Representatives, Washington,  
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444-5555

## **Memorials**

The Audubon Society of  
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When sending your gift,  
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Please also give the name  
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## **Bequests**

If you find an injured bird of  
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**Audubon Society of Omaha, 11809 Old Maple Road, Omaha 68164**

**Phone: 445-4138 - <http://audubon-omaha.org>**

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**President Nelli Falzgraf, 414 Ridgewood Dr, Bellevue 68005 292-9687**

**1st Vice President Elliott Bedows, 309 Greenbrier Ct, Bellevue 68005 292-5017**

**2nd Vice President Laurine Blankenau, 3808 Grebe, Omaha 68112 451-3647**

**Treasurer Justin Stolen, 2607 N. 123rd Circle, Omaha 68164 493-6082**

**Past President Eric Scholar, 5012 Nicholas St, Omaha 68132 551-5045**

**Recording Secretary Linda Dennis, 1011 Homer St, Omaha 68107 733-6548**

**Elected Directors Jackie Scholar, 5012 Nicholas St, Omaha 68132 551-5045**

**Mace Hack, 1735 So. 87th St, Omaha 68124 934-5040**

**Mark Armstrong, 12741 Forestdale Dr, Omaha 68123 292-9770**

**Bob Fuchs, 1113 Dillon Dr, Omaha 68132 553-8242**

**Sharon Draper, 6220 Kansas Ave, Omaha 68104 572-4026**

**Clem Klaphake, 707 Garden Ave, Bellevue 68005 292-2276**

**Standing Committee Chairpersons:**

**Conservation Ione Werthman, 11649 Burt St, #011, Omaha 68154 493-0373**

**Education Brian Jensen, 12430 Bel Drive, Omaha NE 68144 333-6375**

**Field Trip Clem Klaphake, 707 Garden Ave, Bellevue 68005 292-2276**

**Finance Nelli Falzgraf, 414 Ridgewood Dr, Bellevue 68005 292-9687**

**Fund Raising Pauline Dickey, 2534 Benson Gardens Blvd, Omaha 68134 932-8205**

**Hospitality DwanDean Leach, 3006 Poppleton, Omaha 68105 346-5769**

**Membership Bechara Embaid, 3218 No. 120th Court Apt. 221, Omaha 68164  
965-9598**

**Natural Areas Mgt Eric Scholar, 5012 Nicholas St, Omaha 68132 551-5045**

**Omaha Raptor Team Jenny Henricksen, 4845 So 167 Ave 68135 895-5487**

**Program Ed Higgins, 3717 No 93rd St, Omaha 68134 572-1957**

**Publication Laurine Blankenau, 3808 Grebe, Omaha 68112 451-3647**

**Publicity Kathy Schwery, 3616 So 96th St, Omaha 68124 397-7343**

**Other Activities:**

**Speakers Bureau Ione Werthman, 11649 Burt St, #011, Omaha 68154 493-0373**

**Naturestudy Vacant**

**Bird Seed Sale Co-Chairs Kathleen Rose, 123 Bellevue Blvd So, Bellevue 68005  
292- 8912**

**Carol Rasmussen, 4503 So. 16th St, Omaha 68107 731-3939**

**Historian Kathleen Rose, 123 Bellevue Blvd So, Bellevue 68005 292-8912**

**Audubon Nebr Director Don Helmuth, P. O. Box 117, Denton NE 68339.....  
(402) 797-2301**

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